BRITISH COLUMBIA
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BCStats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue: 09-25 June 26, 2009

- **BC's population increased 1.7% in first quarter 2009**
- **Sawmills in BC post 28.2% drop in lumber production in April**
- **Number of EI recipients increase 1.7% in April**

Population

- **As of April 1st, British Columbia's population was estimated at 4,435,344, an increase of 73,956 persons (+1.7%) compared to the same quarter in the previous year.** This rate of population growth ranks second in the country behind a 2.7% increase in Alberta and well above the national increase (+1.2%).

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **The increase in the population was largely attributable to an increase in net international migration (+13.0%).** This increase was a result of a net gain in the number of non-permanent residents[1] (+100.2%) which offset a decrease in the number immigrant arrivals (-13.2%).

  During the first quarter, BC experienced a net interprovincial loss of people to Alberta (-855), Saskatchewan (-116) and the Atlantic Provinces (-306). Meanwhile, there was a net inflow of migrants from Ontario (+902), Quebec (+197) and Manitoba (+163). Both Alberta (+7,144) and Saskatchewan (+545) saw the largest interprovincial inflows while most of the remaining provinces saw a net outflow of people due to interprovincial migration, particularly Ontario (-5,015) and Quebec (-2,016).

  Natural increase (+28.8%), the number of births less the number of deaths, also contributed to the rise in population compared to the first quarter in 2008.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

The Economy

- **BC's sawmills registered yet another year-over-year decline in April as output of lumber dropped 28.2%.** Both Coastal (-28.8%) and Interior (-28.2%) mills reduced lumber production significantly. Shipments (-28.6%) and stocks (-14.7%) of BC lumber also continued to dwindle. On a year-to-date basis, production of lumber slowed by almost one-third (-29.8%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Of the more than half million (573,795) mortgages held in British Columbia, 0.31% were in arrears in April.** This ratio has nearly doubled since June 2008 when 0.16% of mortgages were in arrears, meaning that they were unpaid in the previous three months. While this is the highest that the rate has been since April 2004, it is significantly lower than the 0.68% recorded in March 2000. Nationally, 0.40% of all mortgages are in arrears with the highest rate recorded in Alberta (0.54%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **In April, the number of people collecting regular Employment Insurance (EI) benefits in BC rose to 82,720 (*seasonally adjusted*), an increase of 1.7% over the previous month.** Between April 2008 and April 2009, the number of EI beneficiaries more than doubled (+109.0%), an increase second only to Alberta where the number of claimants nearly tripled (+192.4%) over the same period. Nationally, the number of recipients rose 2.7% in April with both Alberta (+16.3%) and Saskatche-

[1] Includes foreign workers and students, refugees and all other lawful temporary residents.

Report Lifelong Learners in British Columbia: Does More Education Lead to Better Employment Outcomes?

Did you know...

In 2008, nearly one in twenty (4.9%) British Columbians reported that they were a diabetic.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

wan (+12.2%) posting double-digit increases.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **The number of British Columbians that entered into bankruptcy jumped 66.1% between April 2008 and April 2009.** Consumer bankruptcies saw the largest increase, rising 67.5% whereas business bankruptcies were up 40.0%. Nationally, the number of bankruptcies rose 32.9% in April, with Alberta (+74.1%), BC (+66.1%) and PEI (+52.5%) posting the largest increases.

Data Source: Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcies

Education

- **There were 48,415 people registered in an apprenticeship training program in BC in 2007, an increase of more than one-fifth (+20.5%) over the level recorded in the previous year.** Registration in trades programs has been rising rapidly since 2004. Between 2004 and 2007, the number of people registered in an apprenticeship program rose by more than four-fifths (+88.2%). Training programs in the building & construction (+135.1%) and metal fabrication (+123.8%) trades recorded the lion's share of the increase, with enrolment more than doubling during that time. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Health

- **The vast majority of Canadians (91%) reported that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their lives in 2008.** Satisfaction levels were strongly linked to perceptions of health. Among those that reported that they were satisfied with life, nearly two-thirds (63%) rated their personal health level as either very good or excellent and less than one-tenth (8%) rated their health as fair or poor. Conversely, of those that indicated that they were dissatisfied with life, less than one-fifth (17%) claimed to be in very good or excellent health, while more than half (54%) felt that their health was either poor or fair.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **In 2008, more than half (51%) of adult Canadians (18 years or older) reported excess weight with nearly one-fifth (17%) indicating a height and weight level consistent with obesity.** Between 2003 and 2008, obesity rates rose from 16% to 18% among men and from 15% to 16% among women. Prevalence of obesity was highest in those aged 55 to 64 years, with more than one-fifth (22%) of adults in that age group classified as obese. Only British Columbia (14%) and Quebec (16%) had obesity rates below the national average. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

The Nation

- **Household net worth fell for a third straight quarter, slipping 1.3% during the first quarter of 2009.** Despite the fact that households added less than 1% in new debt to their liabilities, net worth still fell as a result of losses in equity holdings (-2.2%) and lower real estate values (-0.6%). This decline in net worth led to a slight increase in the household debt-to-net worth ratio to 24.9 cents of debt for every dollar of net worth, from 24.4 cents in the fourth quarter of 2008.

  National net worth fell 0.4% during the first quarter largely a result of a narrowing of Canada's net foreign asset position (-35.2%). This was the first drop in national net worth recorded since 1995. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

The World

- **Real gross domestic product in the United States fell 5.5%[2] (*seasonally adjusted at annual rates*), in the first quarter of 2009.** This marks a third consecutive quarterly decline in US gross domestic product. While personal expenditures on goods and services rose (+1.4%) after falling sharply in each of the two previous quarters, weaker exports (-30.6%) and non-residential investment in buildings (-42.9%) and equipment (-33.7%) continued to pull GDP in the US lower.

Data Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

***Infoline** Issue: 09-25*
June 26, 2009

[2] This is equivalent to an actual quarterly decrease of 1.4% from the fourth quarter of 2008.

Infoline Report

Contact: Cathy Stock
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originally published in
Earnings and Employment Trends Issue 09-04

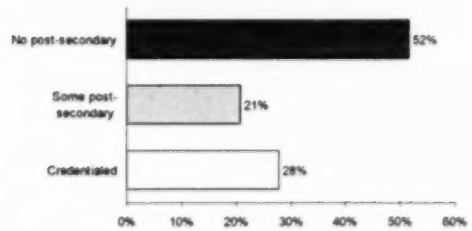
Lifelong Learners in British Columbia: Does More Education Lead to Better Employment Outcomes?

The BC Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Student Outcomes (DACSO) Survey shows that a high percentage of former post-secondary students had completed some previous post-secondary studies, or even a credential, before enrolling in their recent post-secondary program. This article looks at these former students who return to post-secondary studies to explore questions about who pursues additional education, why they return to school, and how they benefit from their further studies.[1]

Entering post-secondary with previous credentials

Using data from the 2007 DACSO survey, this article compares the experiences of three groups of respondents—those with no post-secondary studies prior to enrolling (52%), those who had some post-secondary studies (21%), and those who had earned a credential prior to enrolling (28%).

Distribution of 2007 DACSO survey respondents by the three respondent groups: no post-secondary, some post-secondary and credentialed



[1] Refer to the section entitled About the Survey on page 4 for more information about the former students surveyed.

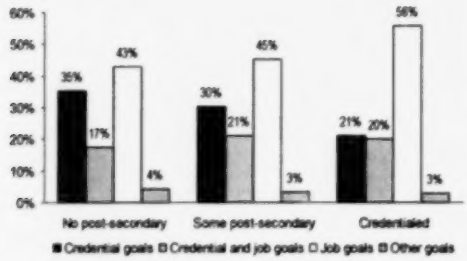
Who are the students who return to post-secondary?

It takes time to participate in post-secondary studies, so it is not surprising that the credentialed group of former students was older, on average, than either of the other two groups. Almost three-quarters of those without previous post-secondary education were under the age of 25, compared with about half of those with some post-secondary and only about 14 percent of those with a previous credential. Over 60 percent of the credentialed group was 30 or older.

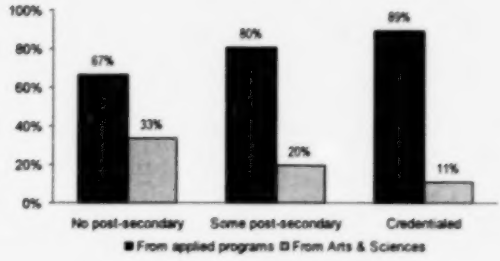
Why did they return?

Students may return to learning to acquire employment skills and advance their careers or for academic reasons, such as earning a credential or transferring to university. The primary reason reported by more than half of the credentialed group was to achieve job-related goals—such as improving existing job skills, learning new ones, or deciding on a career. Of the students with no previous post-secondary or some previous post-secondary, over 30 percent enrolled to complete the requirements for a credential or to prepare to transfer to another post-secondary institution or program.

Credentialed respondents were more likely to report job-related goals for enrolling than were their counterparts in the some post-secondary and no post-secondary groups.



Respondents from the credentialed and some post-secondary groups were more likely to have taken applied programs than those in the no post-secondary group.



What programs did they take?

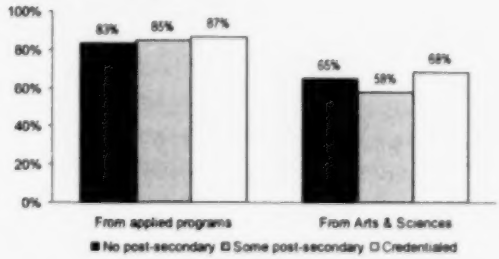
Given their emphasis on job-related goals, it is not surprising that the credentialed group was the most likely of all the groups to have enrolled in applied programs, as opposed to Arts and Sciences programs.[2] With their focus on relatively short, applied programs, students with a prior credential tended to select post-secondary institutions in the Lower Mainland, which may have a greater selection of the specialized programs these students are seeking. When selecting the institution at which they would study, a higher proportion of the credentialed group considered the reputation of the institution and the availability of a particular program than did the other groups.

Leaving post-secondary study

What are their employment outcomes?

Credentialed respondents were the most likely to be employed at the time of the survey—85 percent, compared with 79 percent of the some post-secondary group and 77 percent of the no post-secondary group.

Credentialed respondents from applied and Arts and Sciences programs were the most likely to be employed.



However, the higher rate of employment for the credentialed group reflects their concentration in applied programs and their age. After controlling for these factors, there is little difference in the employment rates of the three groups. There are also no significant differences, after accounting for program of study and age, in the percentages of former students employed full-time in their

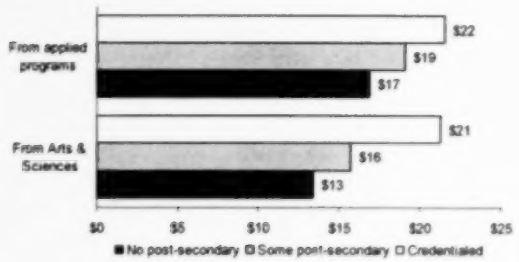
[2] Applied programs are designed to lead to employment in specific fields, while Arts and Sciences programs most often lead to further education.

main job, employed in a permanent job, or the percentages who are self-employed.

How do wages differ across the groups?

In terms of hourly wage, having a previous credential makes a difference. Credentialed respondents in almost every age group earn significantly more, on average, than the no-post-secondary group, and often earn significantly more than the some post-secondary group as well.

Former students with previous education reported higher hourly wages in 2007.



Getting a job

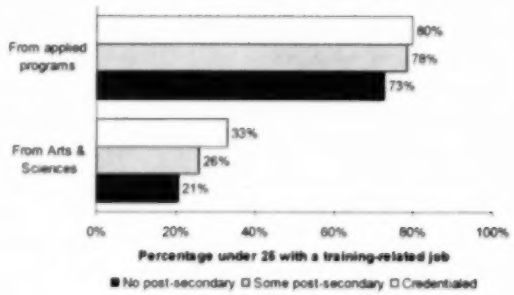
Having previous studies appears to be particularly useful to younger former students in getting and performing their jobs, but less so for their older counterparts.

Employed former students who did not have the same job during their studies were asked how useful their program was in getting their job. Differences in responses between the three groups were significant for those from the youngest two age groups who took applied programs. In the under 25 age group, 61 percent of the credentialed and 63 percent of the some post-secondary groups said their studies were very useful to them in getting a job, compared with 56 percent for the no post-secondary group. In the 25 to 29 age group, 70 percent of credentialed employees said their education was very useful, compared with 62 percent for the other two groups.

Getting a training-related job

It appears that having a credential or some previous post-secondary studies makes a difference with respect to the likelihood of securing a job related to one's training; 86 percent of credentialed respondents from applied programs had training-related jobs, compared with 82 percent of some post-secondary and 77 percent of no post-secondary. However, after controlling for age, it is only in the youngest age group of both applied and Arts and Sciences programs where the difference in the proportion of those who have a job related to their training, and those who do not, is significant. This suggests that academic credentials are important to those under 25 years of age in securing training-related work, but other factors may be more important for older workers, such as experience in the labour force.

Former students under 25 years of age who had a credential or some previous studies were more likely to find a training-related job than their no post-secondary counterparts.

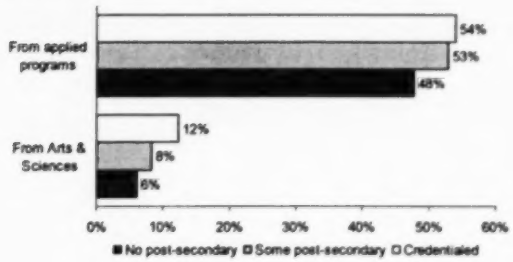


Performing the job

Former students who were employed were asked to assess the usefulness of their post-secondary education in performing their jobs. Significant differences between the three groups were observed only for the youngest respondents. Credentialed respondents under age 25 were the most likely to say the knowledge and skills they gained

were very useful to them in performing their duties, regardless of the type of program they took.

Younger credentialed respondents were the most likely to say their education was very useful to them in performing their jobs.[3]



Conclusion

Students who returned to learning after already completing a post-secondary credential did so primarily to advance their careers and achieve job goals or a combination of job and credential goals. These respondents tended to enrol in relatively short, applied programs and, when selecting their programs, placed a greater emphasis on institution reputation and the availability of unique programs than did the other groups.

Survey respondents who had prior credentials tended to have better employment outcomes than respondents who had previous post-secondary experience without a credential or who had no previous post-secondary education; however, those who had prior post-secondary tended to be older and to have taken applied programs. After accounting for these factors, the main employment outcome that was significantly different was wage, with those having previous credentials earning more.

For some labour market variables, such as having a job related to training and the usefulness of training in getting and performing a job, differences among the three groups were significant for respondents in their twenties. With less time to acquire valuable work experience, it follows that educational experience and credentials are relatively more important to the labour market outcomes of the youngest respondents.

About the Survey

The Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Student Outcomes (DACSO) Survey (formerly called the BC College and Institute Student Outcomes Survey) is an annual province-wide survey of former students from B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions who have taken diploma, certificate, or associate degree (university transfer) programs. It is conducted with funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development and from the institutions themselves. The British Columbia Outcomes Working Group (OWG) oversees the survey project.

This article draws on the 2007 DACSO survey, which contacted 16,339 former students 9 to 20 months after they completed (or nearly completed) their program of study. The survey asked respondents about their educational experience and their subsequent employment outcomes, further education, and personal development.

For more information on the DACSO project, please see:
http://outcomes.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/.

[3] Note that the relatively low percentage of Arts and Sciences students reporting that their program was "very useful" to them in performing their jobs relates to the fact that Arts and Sciences programs are not intended to provide students with job skills.

Infoline

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jan 1/2009	% change on one year ago
BC	4,420.0	1.7
Canada	33,504.7	1.2
GDP and INCOME (Revised Apr 27)		
(BC - at market prices)	2008	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	199,214	3.5
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	164,161	-0.3
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita) (reflects revised pop)*	37,466	-1.9
Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)*	26,110	3.3
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Apr	2,681	-2.1
Merchandise Exports - Apr	2,111	-4.5
Retail Sales - Apr	4,350	1.3
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on	12-month avg
(all items - May 2009)	one year ago	% change
BC	0.1	1.9
Vancouver	0.1	2.1
Victoria	0.3	1.8
Canada	0.1	1.9
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	May '09	prev. month
Labour Force - BC	2,443	0.3
Employed - BC	2,259	0.1
Unemployed - BC	185	2.6
		Apr '09
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	7.6	7.4
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	8.4	8.0
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Jun 17/2009	Jun 18/2008
Prime Business Rate	2.25	4.75
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	3.75	6.95
- 5 year	5.85	7.15
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Jun 17/2009	Jun 18/2008
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	1.1371	1.0145
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	0.8842	0.9820
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	May '09	one year ago
BC	790.22	1.6
Canada	795.49	2.3

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

Statistical Profiles of Aboriginal Peoples

These profiles provide comparisons of the socio-economic conditions of the Aboriginal populations as well as profiles of Aboriginal groups such as First Nations, Métis, and Status Indians using data available from the 2006 Census. These profiles provide a range of data with particular focus on education and labour market issues.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen01/abor/ap_main.asp

Socio-Economic Profiles

Revisions for 2008 now available. The profiles consist of charts and tables for the 26 Regional Districts, 86 Local Health Areas, 16 Health Service Delivery Areas, 5 Health Authorities, 8 Development Regions, and 15 College Regions within the Province of British Columbia. Also included are the special geographies of the Georgia, Fraser, and Columbia Basins.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/sep/choose.asp

BC Economic Accounts

With this release from Statistics Canada, preliminary estimates have been made for 2008 without revisions to previous years. BC gross domestic product (GDP), personal income, final domestic demand and trade flow data have been updated on our website.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/econ_acct.asp

Released this week by BC Stats

- Business Indicators, June 2009
- Current Statistics, June 2009

Next week

- Tourism Sector Monitor, June 2009
- Quarterly Regional Statistics, 1st Quarter 2009

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